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Published by Sun Media Publishing Inc.

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INTERVIEW

ROYAL LEPAGE

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CRIME: West Lincoln family sent to hospital as car sought for getaway

Pursuit suspects eyed for violent robberies

GREG FURMINGER
QMI Agency Niagara

An unsuspecting West Lincoln family was sent to hospital early Monday after a suspect in a pursuit that involved a U.S. helicopter and several Ontario law-enforcement agencies barged through homes in order to seize another getaway vehicle.

That sums up a lengthy manhunt that began in west Pelham early Monday morning and which ended about 80 kilometres away on the Six Nations reserve in Brant County.

Two suspects are in custody and police are looking into a possible link to recent violent armed robberies, including one at the end of December at the Target gas station in Pelham and an Esso in Thorold.

See **ROBBERY** on Page 2



DAN KAHN/TRIBUNE STAFF

For the second time in just more than two weeks, robbers struck at the 24-hour Target gas station at 151 Hwy. 20 W. in Pelham. Police on Monday were expected to announce details of the case, including of a lengthy police pursuit that followed the robbery.

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UPFRONT

ROBBERY

Pursuit leads to arrest

From Page 1

Niagara Regional Police Const. Derek Watson said the chain of events started unfolding at about 1:38 a.m. when police spotted a stolen green GMC Suburban stolen from Brantford and travelling east on Hwy. 20 in Pelham just west of Hwy. 24.

Officers initiated a traffic stop, but the driver refused to pull over. He was pursued south onto Hwy. 24 then back to westbound Hwy. 20.

Watson said a second crime patrol unit was in the area — specifically assigned because of the robberies — and successfully deployed a spike belt on Twenty Rd. west of Regional Rd. 27.

With a least one punctured tire, the Suburban continued to a dead end on Concession 4 in West Lincoln where two males jumped out of the vehicle and ran into a wooded area in opposite directions.

Additional NRP units and the helicopter from the Buffalo, N.Y.-based Erie County Sheriff's Department were called out to assist in maintaining a perimeter and



tracking the suspects.

At 6 a.m. the NRP were called to the Pioneer gas bar at Hwys. 20 and 24. Watson said, where one of the suspects was located and arrested without incident.

In the hours following the initial chase, three homes were broken into in the area of Hwy. 20 in West Lincoln. At the first home the suspect was confronted by the homeowner so he fled.

In the second home a mother, father and adult son were injured after being assaulted by the suspect. All three were taken to hospital with serious injuries, though none were considered life-threatening.

At the third home the suspect was able to steal a Toyota Matrix after an altercation with the homeowners.

The car was tracked from the air by the sheriff's department helicopter and

pursued to the Brantford area. A suspect male was subsequently located in a home on Mohawk Rd. east of Townline and arrested by Six Nations Police. The suspect was then turned over to Niagara police.

OPP and Six Nations police delivered all comment to the NRP. Facing numerous charges in relation to this matter are Joshua Beaver, 24, of Hagersville and Nicholas Hill, 27, of Jarvis. Both remain in custody.

There are no outstanding suspects.

An investigation continues with the assistance of Waterloo Regional Police Service, Hamilton Police Service and Six Nations Police.

Watson said a special NRP crime prevention patrol has been assigned to the Hwy. 20 corridor in response to recent robberies.

He said the suspects arrested Monday are "certainly under investigation" for recent violent robberies.

On Saturday, Dec. 28, the 24-hour Target gas station at 151 Hwy. 20 W. at Hlalt St. in Pelham was robbed by two disguised men at about 5:40

a.m. One was armed with a handgun. The clerk was made to get on the ground, while the men stole cash and cigarettes.

Both robbers fled the store in a green 2005 GMC Sierra pickup truck that was previously stolen from Hamilton. That truck was discovered in flames minutes later in a nearby residential neighbourhood.

The suspects were believed to have fled that residential area in a second stolen truck — a grey 2001 Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck that had a Pelham firefighter sticker on a window.

One of the suspects was described by police at the time as possibly Native American. Both suspects in the Dec. 28 robbery were believed by police to reside in either the Hamilton or Haldimand area.

A similar robbery took place on Friday, Jan. 3, at the Esso Station at 13210 Hwy. 20 in Thorold, where two masked men entered the store and ordered the clerk to give them all of the cash at about 12:05 a.m.

The female clerk was roughed up and received minor injuries.

CHAIN OF EVENTS

1. Just after 1:30 a.m.

Monday, NRP spots a stolen truck at Hwy. 20 near Hwy. 24

2. NRP officer attempts to pull the truck over, but it heads south on Hwy. 24, turns around and then heads west on Hwy. 20

3. Truck hits spike belt on Twenty Rd. near Regional Rd. 27

4. Vehicle comes to a dead end on Concession 4, two suspects exit truck and run

5. In the hours following initial chase, three homes broken

into in the area of Hwy. 20 in West Lincoln. At second home, three home people assaulted before suspects flee. At third home, suspect flees in stolen Toyota Matrix.

6. Erie County Sheriff's Office helicopter used to track Toyota into Brantford area. One suspect arrested by Six Nations Police at a home on Mohawk Rd. near Townline Rd.

7. Second suspect arrested at 6 a.m. Monday at gas station at Hwys. 20 and 24

Both suspects fled in a black GMC Envoy stolen from north St. Catharines. It, too, was torched. Waterloo Regional Police

are investigating a similar type robbery in Cambridge.

greg.furminger@summedia.ca
Twitter: @GregK7TheInfo



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LOCAL NEWS

■ **DOWN SYNDROME:** March event to deal with chromosomal condition issues

'She's exactly how she's meant to be'

RAY SPITERI

QM Agency Niagara

Shock and disbelief to pride and joy.

Those are just some of the emotions Jennifer Mooradian has felt as a Niagara mother of a five-year-old child with Down syndrome.

"At first you feel like the bottom has dropped out of your world," said Mooradian, who didn't know her daughter Emi had the condition until she was 13 weeks old.

"But you quickly come to realize that all it is a label. You wish you knew then what you know now."

"Yes she has an extra chromosome, but she's exactly how she's meant to be. It takes her longer to learn things — to walk and talk — but she does learn to do them."

"She has a wonderful personality. She is a perfect child."

Down syndrome is a genetic condition that can vary from person to person.

It has no cure or treatment. About one in 800 babies are born with it.

There may be physical signs such as a differently shaped head and flattened nose. A child can face physical, mental and social development challenges.

But many with Down syndrome go to university and college and hold down jobs. They get married, and make vital community contributions.

Families in the same position as Mooradian's will con-



BOB TYMCZYK/QM AGENCY NIAGARA

Jennifer Mooradian with her five-year-old daughter Emi Gamble. A kick-off to World Down syndrome day in March at the Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls.

vene in Niagara Falls from March 7-9 at Great Wolf Lodge as the International Down Syndrome Coalition holds a networking and get-together session.

The three-day event is meant to be a kickoff to World Down Syndrome Day, which is also recognized by the

United Nations, March 21.

Last year, the worldwide coalition, based in the United States, held events at five Great Wolf Lodge locations throughout America.

This year, the group has expanded it to 11, including one in Canada (Niagara Falls).

Coalition founder Diane Grover said on the first day, participants will take part in a meet and greet. On the second day, they will enjoy the water park and have a pizza party.

They will enjoy the park again on Sunday, as well as have the chance to see the

city.

She said last year, some locations attracted up to 200 people.

"Our families want to show that we're not all grieving all the time," said Grover.

"When a parent receives a diagnosis that their child has Down syndrome, very often

the prognosis ... is rather grim."

"But over time, that parent wants to show the world, 'I'm OK, my child is OK. We're happy. Life is good.'"

The organization is represented by families and volunteers. Its mission is to celebrate and enhance the lives of people with Down syndrome, as well as offer support to families. The coalition will connect parents to each other and direct them to their local Down syndrome associations.

"Nobody has to pay to be part of our organization," she said.

Mooradian, who is president of Down Syndrome Caring Parents Niagara, a local support group for parents of children who have Down syndrome, said the Great Wolf Lodge event is more exclusive to families impacted by the condition, but it's "nice to come together as a group."

"It's good that we can receive up-to-date information, network and check in with other families," she said. "It allows us to work as mentors and peers. We can share our challenges and our triumphs."

For more information about, and to make reservations for, the March 7-9 event, visit www.thedsc.org, call Eleanor Culmone at 905-886-0661 or email her at jalc.eleanor@hotmail.com.

ray.spiteri@sunmedia.ca

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Strong Year for Real Estate in Pelham

Our local housing market is entering into the new year in solid shape, with predictions of another positive year of growth on the horizon. Residential sales in Pelham reached 215, a healthy 2.87% increase over the total of 209 recorded in 2012. It is the surging average price growth in our community that is the number to watch in 2014.



CATHY
BERKHOUT-BOSSE

The 12-month average price in Pelham continues to rise at a startling pace - now standing at \$347,250 - up 8.4% from the figure of \$320,685 recorded at year-end 2012.

Conversely, the 12-month average price in Welland slipped marginally from \$186,025 in December 2012 to the 2013 year-end tally of \$185,620.

The preliminary year-end MLS sales reports of the Niagara Association of REALTORS® indicate that sales activity in the Rose City dropped 7.1% in 2013. In total, there were 681 residential sales reported in Welland during the year compared to 738 transactions recorded in 2012.

Although the overall sales volume in Welland is lagging behind last year, listing inventory levels continue to trend down. The net effect of reduced supply is keeping the market in a tentative state of balance.

The average days on the market for homes sold in Welland shifted to 65 days an improvement over last year's average of 72 days. In Pelham it took an average of 83 days to sell a home down from 88 days in 2012.

According to the RE/MAX Housing Market Outlook 2013 released in December new peaks in average price were realized in almost every one of the 26 major centres across the country except in 2013, when the national average forecasted to appreciate 4% by year-end.

Next year national home sales are expected to climb another two per cent to 475,000 units while the value of an average Canadian home is predicted to jump another 3% to a national average price of \$390,000.

*Cathy Berkhout-Bosse, M.B.A. is a real estate broker at Realtek Welland Realty Ltd. Broker in Pelham. You may read just columns at: <http://www.NiagaraRealtySourceReport.com>

COMMENTS

Busy start to 2014 for library

FRAN OILES

Looking forward instead of back, there are all sorts of events for every age group planned for the next two months.

Starting with adults instead of children for a change, there are the usual drop-ins: Knitting Club (the former Knit Wits, the name of which was changed because of course none of our patrons are that), Fridays at 10:30 and Scrappy Drop-in on Mondays at 10:30 a.m.

Bridge has started again, the next game is Jan 22 at 1 p.m., and the Gadget Clinic is on Saturdays starting at 12:30 p.m. Book Clubs are ongoing as is the monthly Hearing Clinic, the first of which takes place Jan. 27. Planned events: Financial Mythbusters on Jan. 22 at 6:30 p.m. (Free, but please register ahead) and Crocheting for Knitters 3:15-4:30 p.m. a two-session class, Friday Jan. 17 and 24 \$15. (Pre-registration required.)

■ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THANKS TO HYDRO CREWS

Allison Langley's Jan. 6 article "Niagara hydro crews lend a hand" highlights the untiring dedication Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. crews demonstrated in order to safely restore power to the residents and businesses in Niagara and Milton.

On behalf of everyone in both regions, I would like to thank the NPEI crews who selflessly gave up time with their families so that others could embrace the holiday season.

While the days following the ice storm presented challenges for Ontarians, it also summoned goodwill and generosity amongst neighbours.

The NPEI crews worked around the clock in extreme weather conditions to safely restore power - first in their own community, then further afield. We are grateful for their commitment and dedication.

BOB CHARELLI

ONTARIO MINISTER OF ENERGY

Finally, we are going to try the Overdrive and E-Books class again. We had arranged for a class in the morning during the first full week of January but not enough people signed up, so we are trying it again on Jan. 22, 6 to 8 p.m. \$10. Limit of eight participants. Please register and pay ahead.

Just a heads-up about events happening early in February: Mediation Workshop, Feb. 4 at 6 to 8 p.m. (note time) \$3 and the Seniors Valentine's Tea, Feb. 5 at 2 to 3 p.m. Free, but please register beforehand because you wouldn't want them other too few goodies.

Turning now to children, there are the usual weekly offerings starting the week of Jan. 13, namely Babies to Toddlers (newbies to 18 months) on Tuesdays from 10 to 10:30 a.m. \$18 for a series of five meetings, Time for Twos (20-36 months) on Thursdays from 10 to 10:30 a.m. \$18 for the series and Ready, Set, Learn (3-6 yrs) on Thursdays at 1 p.m. \$20 Registration is open now.

After School is Cool (Grades 1 to 4)

Tuesdays 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., is an opportunity to enhance your child's reading skills with the help of a teen buddy. Free, but please register ahead since we need to pair volunteers with readers. Playdough Club for two to six years takes place at Maple Ace Branch in Fenwick on Fridays at 10 a.m. \$2 per meeting attended. Just drop-in. And, last but not least, also at Maple Ace, is Coccos Club, a book club for children in Grades 5 to 8, which takes place at Maple Ace once a month on the last Thursday, starting Jan. 30, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

As you have no doubt heard, our hours have been trimmed. The Fenwick Branch now opens at 10 a.m. Monday to Friday and at noon on Saturday. Hours of closing are still the same. Maple Ace Branch in Fenwick will only be open to the public on Mondays from 1 to 8 p.m. and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

More next time. See you at the Library!

LHIN NEEDS MORE TRANSPARENCY

Reporter Marlene Bergsma expresses how I felt when I attended LHIN meetings. They pretend to be informing the public, but it comes after the fact and when the decisions have already been made without any consultation from the paying public. They have all the evading tactics firmly in place so their decisions are written in stone without further discussion. To me, it seems to be a done deal. Considering the public is footing the bill, how dare they not give us a reasonable report at a reasonable time so that we see where our hard-earned money is being spent and if the money is being allocated in a manner which benefits the communities involved? Why is the meeting on Jan. 16 private? Why can't Mr. Shea be privy to the report prior to the meeting?

ANNE KIRKICS

FORT ERIE

SPREAD THE WORD

The effects of climate change are occurring in Canada and globally more severe storms, floods, heat waves, droughts and fires. We can no longer delay action. A retired science teacher, I will join the Great March for Climate Action. Hundreds of people will walk across America to call for action starting March 1 in Los Angeles and ending Nov. 1 in Washington, D.C. I am walking the first and last parts, for a total of 1,000 miles. I will carry a Canadian flag and will pass it on to other Canadians to carry in a relay. People may join the march for one day or more. More marchers are needed to draw attention to the climate crisis. Please spread the word to anyone who may be interested (climateamr.org).

ANITA PEARTE

PERTH

GIVE US YOUR VIEWS

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■ **CRIME:** Retired high school teacher John Horvath was murdered in his Welland home 15 years ago. Who did it?

Is a killer among us?

GREG FURNINGER
(M) Agency Niagara

John Horvath's killer is probably in his mid-30s to early 40s now. He could be your friend or co-worker.

Then again, maybe he's left the area. Maybe he's dead.

What also remains unknown is his name. Facts about the death of the retired E.L. Crossley Secondary School shop teacher, however, have remained certain over time.

It was 15 years ago, on Jan. 5, 1999 that the body of the 75-year-old was found at the bottom of the basement stairs of the red brick bungalow on Norway Ave. where Horvath had lived for about a half century.

He was lying in a pool of blood, and had been badly beaten.

Police believe he died on the afternoon or evening of Jan. 2, when he started at least one intruder.

Horvath had spent the Christmas holidays in Thunder Bay visiting his daughter, but



FILE PHOTO

Investigators approach the Norway Ave. home of John Horvath, in this photo taken Tuesday, Jan. 5, 1999.

returned home a few days earlier than planned.

He died of a deliberate blow to the head that fractured his skull.

"It's still considered an active case for the Niagara Regional Police Service," said Staff Sgt. Dave Hunter, who heads the major crime unit. "I don't like to call them 'cold cases' — that's the inference of a volcano that's dormant."

A detective is actively assigned to the homicide, although Hunter said little in the

way of information has come in in recent years that could bring a killer to justice.

"We would welcome information — no matter how trivial it may be — in helping further our investigation," Hunter said. But he knows that as the years go on, "time dilutes memories." Possibly too, someone who may have known something that could have helped investigators might now be dead.

Skill, police won't surrender to the passage of time.

Why has the case not been

solved?

Police wish they had that magic answer.

"So much work and effort and followup was put into it, and it was thought it was solvable but we couldn't get that one crack," said Donna Moody, who was the inspector heading the major crime unit at the time of the murder. For the past seven years, she has been director of Brock University campus security.

For Moody, the case has always been personal.

She was living just a few streets away from the crime scene. And as a hometown girl who started her policing career in Welland in 1974, there was a sense of obligation to her community that the case not go unsolved.

For Moody, the January snow that follows each Christmas season brings to mind Horvath's murder.

"There were persons of interest that we investigated, but there was never enough evidence to narrow it down to one suspect," she recalled.

"It should have been easily solved, but for some unknown reason there wasn't that one piece. We tried so many avenues of investigation."

Rewards were offered, a one-minute Crime Stoppers of Niagara segment aired on a Hamilton TV news station in June 2000, and as DNA analysis techniques advanced there remained glimmers of hope.

An 11-page profile penned by the Ontario Provincial Police behavioural sciences section in Orillia, released to the media in

February 1999, painted a picture of a killer likely in his 20s, familiar with Welland and who likely had a history of poor relationships and job performance. He was probably impulsive and self-centred, blaming others for his problems.

The person who killed John Horvath likely uses alcohol and/or drugs, according to the profile, and that person may have left a job soon after the crime. It is also possible a second person aided in planning or committing the crime, something Niagara police first divulged 16 months after Horvath's death.

Police to this date have not said what weapon was used in his killing and whether anything was stolen.

Both Hunter and Moody hope perhaps this reminder of a murder that shook Welland to its core 15 years ago could help in some way lead to an arrest. Or to closing the books.

"It's still one (murder) that sticks in people's minds," said Moody.

"It's one that haunts us"

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■ **COMMUNITY:** Support Pelham Cares

Gala to raise money for new home

MELISSA MANGELSEN
Tribune Staff

The Home for Good Capital Campaign Committee will be hosting The Gala for Good, March 1, as part of the campaign to raise money for the permanent home for Pelham Cares.

Pelham Cares recently announced the purchase of a building for its permanent home, after 30 years of searching for a suitable, affordable option. On April 1, it will call 191 Hwy. 20 East home.

Funds have been raised since 2008, as a result of Project Pelham Cares, a committee formed to find a permanent home. While the work of that committee revealed potential sites, no suitable home was found, but the fundraising continued.

Now, the Home for Good Campaign is hosting the gala as a one-time final push for the raising of funds to offset the mortgage costs significantly while having con-

ECONOMY

Niagara jobless rate worst in Ontario

ALLAN BENNER
DMI Agency Niagara

WELLAND — At 8.8%, Niagara had the highest unemployment rate in Ontario in December.

Across the country, Niagara's unemployment numbers were exceeded only by Canada's Maritime provinces in the report released Friday by Statistics Canada.

The unemployment rate climbed in Ontario to 7.5%, with 39,000 job losses reported across the province. About 46,000 jobs were lost across Canada.

In light of the statistics, Welland MPP

tingency funds for future necessities.

The campaign goal has been set at \$500,000. More than \$160,000 has already been raised.

The gala will start at 6 p.m. with cocktails, followed by dinner at 7 p.m. The evening will feature live entertainment from several Niagara-area musicians. There will be a dance, silent auction and a few "surprises".

Tickets are \$125 and can be reserved in tables. To reserve tickets call the Pelham Cares office at 905-892-5300, or by email at info@pelhamcares.org. Tickets are also available from Tracy Holmwood at 905-688-9224, or tholmwood@miller-restoration.com.

The Gala for Good will be held at the Lookout Point Country Club on Tice Rd. in Fonthill.

melissa.mangelsen@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @tribunemelissa

Cindy Forster said it's clear the provincial government has failed to bolster Ontario's economy.

And despite claims of job creation by the Liberal government, Forster said the emerging jobs are often part time and offer lower wages than the jobs being lost.

Forster said the NDP has proposed tying tax credits to job creation, rather than offering widespread corporate tax cuts.

See JOBS on Page 8

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RECREATION PROGRAMS & CLASSES

Zumba Fitness @ Pelham Arena

Tuesday Jan 21 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Thursday Jan 23 9:30 am - 10:30 am

Drop in and try any session for \$6 or purchase your 10 + 2 bonus passes for \$60.

Zumba Kids & Zumba Kids Jr. @ Pelham Arena

Turn up the music, wiggle, shake and have a blast with your friends in these rockin', high-energy fitness parties packed with specially choreographed kid-friendly routines.

Tuesday Jan 21 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm (4-7 yrs)
6:00 pm - 6:30 pm (8+ yrs)

Drop in and try any session for \$4.50 at Pelham Town Hall.

For more information on any of the Zumba classes, please contact jcook@pelham.ca or call 905 892-2607 ext. 329.

Walking Club - Everyone is welcome! - Jan 21 and Jan 23

Interested in walking in Pelham? Interested in joining a Walking Club? Then join us Tuesdays at Pelham Arena from 9-10 am and Thursdays at Fonthill Bandshell from 9-10:30 am. For more information, please contact jcook@pelham.ca or call 905 892-2607 ext. 329.

Arena Programs

Public Skating	Adult Public Skating	Adult/Preschool	Men's Shinny Hockey	Women's Shinny Hockey	Women's Learn to Play Hockey
Sunday Jan 19 1:00-2:20 pm Tuesday Jan 21 7:30-8:30 pm Friday Jan 24 8:00 - 9:30 pm	Thursday Jan 23 1:00 - 2:00 pm	Tuesday Jan 21 1:00 - 2:00 pm Friday Jan 24 10:00 - 11 am	Tuesday Jan 21 8:00 - 9:00 am Friday Jan 24 9:00 - 10:00 am	Monday Jan 20 10:00 - 11:00 am Thursday Jan 23 10:30 - 11:30 am	Thursday Jan 23 9:30 - 10:30 am

"Get Active for Life" Join us at a park near you! Participation is at no charge, but we do require a registration form be submitted.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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For more information, please visit pelham.ca, contact jcook@pelham.ca or call 905 892-2607 ext. 329.

COMMUNITY EVENTS & NEWS

Overdrive and E-Books - Learn step by step how to download and use the Pelham Public Library's Overdrive e-books. You must have basic computer skills, an email address and a Pelham Public Library card. Wed., Jan. 22 from 6-8. Cost is \$10.00 and payable at time of registration.

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Full details and registration forms will be available soon at www.pelham.ca and at Town Hall.

LOCAL NEWS

JOBS

Niagara has highest unemployment rate

From page 6

She said incentives should be reserved for employers that "invest in equipment, machinery and technology, and if they hire and create jobs in Ontario."

"Those kinds of tax credits need to be given to companies to keep good jobs here in Ontario, or to create new jobs," she said. "General corporate tax credits aren't working."

She said there should also be

more investment in universities and colleges, and in research and development.

Despite the dismal numbers, Niagara Workforce Planning Board's executive director David Alexander said people should instead be concerned about the participation rate

— the percent of working-age people who are either working or actively looking for work.

"The focus of everyone's concern is typically on the unem-

ployment number. I think what we need to be concerned about is the participation rate, how many people overall are participating in the economy and actively looking for work," Alexander said.

In December, that number was 61.9% in Niagara. Alexander said the statistics also highlight the importance of post-secondary education.

"We know that employers are looking for skilled people, not

only the applied skills needed in the workplace, but also the soft skills and the attitude to be part of a team," he said. "These are the people who are getting jobs. The message to the individual should be to seek the training and develop the positive and determined outlook to become employed or keep your job."

Meanwhile, Alexander said people need to be prepared for a few career changes during

their lives.

"What we're finding is that people aren't just switching jobs many times in their career, but they're switching careers too. That's just the nature of our North American economy."

And rather than focus on current statistics, Alexander said he'd prefer to look ahead and determine ways of enhancing the economy in years to come.

"My preference is to be

focused on the long term and develop business and entrepreneurial skills within people."

He said the board would like to see better unemployment for Niagara in the future too, "but it's going to require a coordinated effort."

Alexander said more information about the latest statistics is available on the board's website: www.niagaraworkforce.ca and on Statistics Canada's website.

PERSONAL FINANCE

Many workers facing a retirement crunch: survey

DON FRASER

(M) Agency

Doug Rapelje counts himself as one of the secure seniors.

Raising four children with his wife meant not being able to seriously save for retirement until he was in his 50s. But a decent pension from his job with Niagara Region

meant his recent years have been comfortable.

"Having a livable income is so important in retirement, if you're going to enjoy it," said Rapelje, 60, a Welland resident and retiree for 16 years.

It's a major concern relating to quality of life when you get older."

Meridian Credit Union

released a retirement study Monday that raises alarm bells about the long-term financial security of Ontario residents. It said 40% of Ontarians are putting off saving for retirement in order to pay down their debts, and 21% have not yet started saving for retirement.

See SAVINGS on Page 9

Findings from Meridian's Ontario Retirement Study, conducted by Harris/Decima

■ 21% of respondents said they had yet to start saving for retirement.

■ 52% said they were focused on paying off debt.

■ 51% said they couldn't afford it.

■ 49% indicated saving for

retirement is not a priority at the moment.

■ RRSPs (75%), pension plans from work (58%) and Tax Free Savings Accounts (50%) are the most popular retirement savings products held by Ontarians.

■ 18% say they expect some sort of inheritance to help with their retirement needs.

■ Ontarians plan to retire when they are 62, while current retirees on average retired at 59.

Dr. Kimberly Dobson

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CALEWS

SENIORS

Time is best ally in planning for retirement

From Page 8
About how much saving for retirement is not a priority right now.

The surprising numbers come from a survey of estimates of retirement security are at the forefront. Some pension plans that once seemed secure are struggling, and governments are increasingly emphasizing personal responsibility for retirement savings.

Debate about increasing contributions to the federal Canada Pension Plan has also been rekindled.

With that in mind, Rapelle — former Niagara Region social services and senior citizens' services director — well knows saving or contributing to a retirement fund isn't easy for some.

"It's fine to say to people they must plan and save for retirement," said Rapelle, who is also with the Niagara Age Friendly Community Network. "But it's a big order when you have other responsibilities."

He points to another problem — many have also been employed in jobs without pension plan options, and that adds to concerns about financial security in retirement.

Some retired people with pensions that aren't indexed to cost of living are trying to live on the same amount of pension they started with decades ago.

One result of this is a noticeable change in the number of older people working in fast-food outlets, big box stores, working as crossing

guards, which is for many a necessity to make ends meet," he said.

Acting Meridian CEO Bill Maurin offers blunt advice about saving for a decent retirement.

"Time is your best friend here," he said. "I agree (debt) repayment is critical, and something we all need to focus on."

Maurin said as in anything, a balanced approach is best. "People need to look at their assets and liabilities and



Richard Brown
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

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manage both sides of that."

To that end, "take advantage of the savings and investment vehicles out there and ideally come up with a systematic plan."

"Just getting started is what really helps you," Maurin said.

St. Catharines senior Kathleen Van Helvert only recently retired. Careful planning has also helped her financial situ-

ation.

"My husband (who died two years ago) always put in the maximum amount we were allowed, every year since RRSPs first started," said Van Helvert. "It always cuts down on your taxes."

"It's made me very independent now, in these years."

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POLITICS: City of Niagara' question shot down quickly

Committee nixes election referendums

ROB MOULE
QMI Agency Niagara

It doesn't look like Niagarans will be asked referendum questions on amalgamation and regional transit after all.

At its meeting Dec. 12, regional council voted to have two referendum questions prior to the Oct. 27, 2014, municipal ballot: "Should Niagara Region fund regional transit services?" and, "Should the 12 municipalities of Niagara amalgamate to form a new 'City of Niagara'?"

But following a staff report presented Wednesday to the region's integrated community planning committee, the recommendation now is that council nix the idea of putting the two questions to voters.

First off, councillors were told they should not unilaterally pose the amalgamation question on the ballot.

The report, prepared by region clerk Janet Pilon, said "the issue of amalgamation is not within the jurisdiction of any regional municipality and therefore not permitted to appear on municipal elections ballots."

Patrick Robson, the region's commissioner of integrated planning and community planning, told councillors that while municipal restructuring was not within their purview, they could approach the minister of municipal affairs and housing with a request to order the Region to put the amalgamation question on the ballot.

"What the report speaks to, is you could approach the minister to have that action taken so that may be another avenue by which you look to gauge public interest."

As for the question of a regional transit service, councillors were told a renewed ballot question could be asked: "Are you in favour of the idea of the Regional Municipality of Niagara passing the necessary resolutions and bylaws to fund a regionwide transit service?"

The report from Pilon noted the refer-

endum would be considered binding if at least 50% of all eligible voters vote on the question and if more than 50% of the votes are in favour.

The report said a public meeting must be held, in accordance with legislation, prior to a council-of-the-whole vote and recommended that meeting be held Feb. 6.

The issue became a moot point, however, after committee members voted 10-5 to recommend council not move forward on the regional transit referendum issue.

Regional Chair Gary Burroughs was dubious as to whether voters would be properly informed on the regional transit subject.

"I just don't think we're ever going to get enough information to the public to make an informed decision," he said.

Pelham Coun. Brian Baty and St. Catharines Mayor Brian McMahon were concerned about the cost of a referendum.

McMullan said the cost could turn as high as \$75,000 "for a question that poorly formed doesn't possibly capture all you need to capture in a resolution."

After the transit question was dealt with, St. Catharines Coun. Andy Petrovski attempted to once again get the amalgamation question on the ballot.

Petrovski made a motion that Niagara Region ask the minister of municipal affairs and housing to order "the Regional Municipality of Niagara to place the question, 'Are you in favour of the 12 municipalities of Niagara and Niagara Region amalgamating to form a new 'City of Niagara'?"

The motion was quickly voted on and defeated 8-5.

The recommendations from the committee will now go before council at its meeting Jan. 16.

rob.moule@summedia.ca



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GRAND OPENING

AT WELLAND'S NEW ROSE CITY CHRYSLER-DODGE-JEEP-RAM-FIAT DEALERSHIP

Drive Away in a New Vehicle

Rose City Chrysler's bright, enormous new showroom features floor-to-ceiling windows – the perfect place to showcase this year's exciting new vehicles! Come to the Niagara Street dealership's Grand Opening Open House on Saturday, Jan. 18 and see the sleek and sporty 2014 Dodge Dart, which shares the Italian heritage with the Alfa Romeo Giulietta. Check out Chrysler's award-winning line of Ram pickup trucks and Dodge Caravan minivans, or the exciting new 2014 Jeep Cherokee, which is setting the mid-sized SUV market on fire! In addition to having both the Ram and the Dodge Caravan among the top 10 nameplates sold in Canada, "The Journey also remained the number one selling crossover in 2013," says Nick Sebastian, Dealer Principal at Rose City Chrysler. "This year, Chrysler became the only manufacturer of a light duty truck with a diesel engine and plans to enter the mid-size car market with an all-new entry to replace the Chrysler 200. It's all European technology and quality, which we could never offer before, and we now have all that PLUS the new Fiat Studio!" at the new Niagara Street location in Welland.

The welcome Fiat addition makes Rose City Chrysler one of only about 25 select Chrysler dealers in Ontario to handle the Fiat brand. Car enthusiasts already know that as of January 20, 2014 Fiat will officially assume 100 per cent control of the Chrysler, Corporation, Sebastian says. "It's a match made in heaven" he adds. "We gave Fiat larger cars and trucks and they gave us car technology, high-powered and fuel-efficient gas motors, along with 9-speed transmissions and a light duty truck and SUV diesel engine."

Chrysler has done exceptionally well in Canada with 49 consecutive months of year-over-year growth in sales, and now has a strong hold on the "Number 2" spot in Canada, just behind Ford. In addition, Chrysler is the only one of the "Big 5" that grew in market share last year. "As for us, it's been solid and steady growth for seven consecutive years here at Rose City."

Tour, free barbecue and air bag demonstration

On Sat. Jan. 18, everyone is invited to enjoy a free barbecue lunch and take a tour of the new showroom and improved service area, which is warm and easier to access. Make yourself at home and relax in Rose City's "Chrysler Lounge," a comfortable new waiting room equipped with a big-screen TV, where hot coffee is always readily available.

"Take advantage of our special sales event during the grand opening," says Nick, "or just come to say hello and fill out a ballot to win a brand new iPad." In response to customers' concerns about the deployment of air bags, Chrysler Service staff will perform actual air bag deployment demonstrations to show what really happens when air bags ignite.

Partners Share Passion for the Road

An avid car and motorcycle enthusiast, Nick's passion for freedom on the road is contagious; a love he shares with his customers.

"I've been a car guy since I was old enough to talk," he explains. "I knew every car and motorcycle on the road. I built models; I read magazines. As I got older, my buddy and I used to work on our cars and we turned that hobby into a business. I started buying and selling cars that needed work and eventually I ended up in the car business."

Nick's automotive career began 31 years ago at a small AMC Jeep Renault dealership in Hamilton, where he worked his way up to manager. On a corporate reward trip, Nick met the AMC dealer from St. Catharines.

"He offered me a job at his store back in the mid 80's there and I've been in the Niagara area ever since." Sebastian partnered with the Johnston Auto Group from his hometown in Hamilton. Bill Johnston is a fourth-generation Chrysler dealer whose great-grandfather opened their first store more than 80 years ago.

In May of 2006, the two partners took over the Chrysler dealership formerly located on Prince Charles Drive and retained most of the same sales and service staff. "We've added a number of employees over the last seven years, says Nick, but notes that the move has provided an extra special boost in morale for the original employees.

"They now have the beautiful dealership home and work environment they deserve for their efforts and loyalty!" When the new Niagara Street location became available at the end of 2011, plans went into place, Nick recalls, "and we had our official groundbreaking in September, 2012. By February of 2013, construction of the building itself was underway and finally on October 21, 2013 we officially opened for business.

"Right from the get-go, we saw an increase in traffic and in our showroom and service departments. We're already 20 per cent higher than last year at the same time," Nick says, a statistic which bodes well for the typical spring sales season ahead, "and we are really optimistic about 2014."

Approaching its 8th anniversary as a dealership in Welland, with a staff complement of 29, Nick foresees a very bright future for both employees and customers at Rose City Chrysler.

"Hopefully, we will be able to expand our staff even more," he projects. "Our first priority is to take care of our customers and to place special focus on our local market. We want to be the go-to place for Chrysler products in the region."

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COURT

Plea in Project Resurgence drug bust

KARENA WALTER

QMI Agency Niagara

Two months after police ex-

cuted dozens of warrants in early-morning biker raids, two of the accused nabbed in Project Resurgence are already serving jail sen-

tences.

On Thursday, Christopher O'Quinn, 35, of Lowbanks pleaded guilty in a St. Catharines

courtroom to conspiracy to traffic marijuana from July 1, 2013 to Nov. 6, 2013.

O'Quinn was sentenced to 15 months in jail after a joint submission by Crown and defence lawyers.

"You're still young. You could have a life of a law-abiding member of the community," Ontario

Court Judge Joseph Nadel told him.

O'Quinn is the second person to plea from Project Resurgence, a large-scale investigation by Niagara Regional Police that saw 31 people arrested on Nov. 6.

On Dec. 23, Michael Hook, a 30-year-old St. Catharines resident,

pleaded guilty to possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking and possession of heroin for the purpose of trafficking. He was sentenced to four years in jail, less pre-trial custody.

See RAIDS on Page 17

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Pharmacists

MENOPAUSE

Symptoms of menopause can be very uncomfortable. The three most common complaints are hot flashes, insomnia, and vaginal dryness. After the Women's Health Initiative trial many patients discontinued their hormone therapy due to concerns about cardiovascular problems and breast cancer with PREMARIN and PREMPRO. Unfortunately this left many women struggling with their symptoms.

Most recent guidelines have emphasized that short-term use of hormone therapy during early menopause may not be that risky. The risk of heart disease is small if hormones are taken within the first 10 years of menopause. Also, evidence indicates that the risk of breast cancer probably doesn't increase when combination hormone therapy is used for only 2 to 3 years. (Of course you should consult your doctor for their opinion on this information).

There are other options if patients do not want to go the traditional route of hormone replacement. The best way to deal with symptoms is to treat them individually.

For patients with hot flashes try non drug options first. Patients should exercise, manage their weight, stop smoking and avoid hot drinks, caffeine and alcohol. There are some herbal products on the market that can be tried, but in general do not have much evidence for effectiveness. Black cohosh is being used by many women but it does not seem any better than placebo for hot flashes. In addition there have been some reports of liver toxicity with its use. Say you may provide a small benefit. A common dose is 60 grams daily of soy protein from food, or up to 120 mg/day of soy isoflavones from supplements. Evening primrose, dong quai, wild yam, and red clover, chasteberry and ginseng have not been shown to work for hot flashes. There are some prescription drugs that can be tried as well. These are called venlafaxine, gabapentin, and clonidine. You can ask your doctor if one of these agents are right for you.

Vaginal dryness can be treated by an over the counter product called REPLENIX. If this proves ineffective a local estrogen therapy such as VAGIFEM can be tried.

Insomnia can be treated with a low dose non sedative prescription medication such as ZOPICLONE. An over the counter medication like GRAVIL or BENADRYL can also be used on an occasional basis.

Osteoporosis is a real concern for menopausal women not on hormone therapy. Women of this age should make sure they are getting 1500 mg of calcium and 1000 IU of vitamin D daily.

Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement is another option for symptom treatment. Hormones used in this treatment are identical to those in the human body. Bio-Identical Hormone therapy is very individualized treatment. Patients have their hormones analyzed through a saliva test and then their prescriptions are tailor made to meet their needs. Doses and hormones used are compounded in the pharmacy for each individual depending on their deficiencies and physician's prescription. For further information on this type of treatment please visit our website WWW.BOGGIOS.COM.

Menopause can be an extremely difficult time for many women. Luckily there are some good treatment options for the most bothersome symptoms. The best approach to dealing with them is to consult your doctor and pharmacist about the safest most effective treatment for you.

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LOCAL NEWS

RAIDS

Two of the accused in Project Resurgence serving jail

From Page 16

Police began investigating activities of the Outlaws and Black Pistons motorcycle gangs in early 2013. Their investigation uncovered evidence of narcotics trafficking, including heroin, cocaine and marijuana.

Federal prosecutor Tanit Gilliam told the court Thursday that as part of the project, police obtained a wiretap for a phone number.

Text messages and calls were intercepted on the number that involved O'Quinn speaking about marijuana.

In one text message conversation in July, O'Quinn is told by a man to "Get me as much as you can."

O'Quinn replies talking about his timeline. He later says, "It looks really good. Has a nice fruity smell to it."

Another text message conversation in September deals with prices for two different grades of marijuana.

At one point, O'Quinn is told by a man that he's "still high" and "don't be a junkie." O'Quinn responds telling the

man not to worry because the "money is my drug."

O'Quinn's lawyer, Jason Little, said his client has had an addiction problem since he was 14 years old in Grade 9. He asked that O'Quinn serve his sentence at a facility where he can get treatment.

O'Quinn declined to speak to the court.

Nadel said there may be a great deal of money to be made in the drug trade but it's at great risk of loss of liberty.

In addition to the sentence, O'Quinn is prohibited for life from owning weapons.

Another 29 people were charged in Project Resurgence but are still before the courts.

Two of them, Randy McGean, 42 and Isaac Lucas, 36, made a brief appearance in the same courtroom Thursday. The St. Catharines men will return to court by video on Jan. 16.

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Couple were tireless volunteers

ALLAN BENNER

OMI Agency Niagara

"We have lost a real gem," said Linda Sonnenberg, a longtime friend of Barbara and Guy Auger.

On Dec. 25, Sonnenberg learned Barbara died at the Welland hospital from a viral infection. She knew Barbara had been sick, but it was still devastating news — particularly on Christ-

mas Day.

Sonnenberg said she developed a very close friendship with Barbara during the years they volunteered together for Special Olympics.

She said her 64-year-old

friend suffered from "a lot of illness" in the months and years prior to her death.

"You never knew when Barb was going to be unwell. It was on and off throughout the years. She had a number

of illnesses," Sonnenberg said.

But she was shocked to learn that Barbara's husband of 42 years died a day later. Guy Auger died on Boxing Day at the age of 67.

Sonnenberg said Guy was badly injured in an accident while working for Welland's public works department on Dec. 9. But she thought he was recovering.

Ministry probing city worker's death

ALLAN BENNER

OMI Agency Niagara

The death of a city employee is being investigated after the

Ministry of Labour received an anonymous tip — 20 days after he suffered a life-threatening injury.

Welland's human resources

manager Roseanne Mantess said public works foreman Guy Auger, a city employee of 29 years, was working for the municipality Dec. 9 when he

was hospitalized after a workplace accident.

Auger died at the Welland hospital Dec. 26. He was 67 years old.

"The Ministry of Labour is now involved, treating this incident as a workplace fatality," Mantesso said, adding the city is giving the ministry its full cooperation during the investigation.

Andrew Scott, Niagara Emergency Medical Service manager of regulatory compliance, said paramedics responded to a 911 call regarding Auger's injury on the afternoon of Dec. 9. The accident occurred on public property on Willson Rd. "We responded for an adult male patient who was suffering from a traumatic abdominal injury," Scott said.

Auger was then transported to the Welland hospital.

Scott said he couldn't comment on the accident scene or any equipment Auger might have been using at the time.

Ministry of Labour spokesman William Lin said Auger was "assisting in the operation of a flusher truck when (he) was struck by a hose, sustaining an injury."

The Tribune contacted the Ministry of Labour on Dec. 18 and 19, asking if an investigation was being conducted into a workplace accident in the city. Both times, The Tribune was informed that no investigation was underway.

Asked when the ministry was informed about the accident, Mantesso said, "I can't comment on that." She said the Ministry of Labour has up to a year to complete its investigation "and during this time we can't provide any further

comment:

She said all communications regarding the accident and investigation will be dealt with by herself or city manager Craig Stirtzinger.

There's an investigation going on and we want to make sure we do everything correctly, and that's part of it," Stirtzinger said, referring to the city not commenting about when the ministry was notified.

But Lin said the city never notified the ministry about the accident, or about Auger's death. Instead, he said the investigation was launched following an anonymous phone call on Dec. 29.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act requires that all industrial accidents that result in critical injury or death must immediately be reported to the Ministry of Labour.

Although there's no requirement to notify the ministry in cases of non-critical injuries, Lin said a life-threatening injury would be considered critical.

When told about the description of the injuries by responding paramedics, Lin said the ministry "will determine what actually occurred."

Lin said there are substantial penalties for contraventions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

"A successful prosecution could for each conviction result in a fine of up to \$25,000 for an individual, and/or up to 12 months of imprisonment, and a fine of up to \$500,000 for a corporation," he said.

allan.benner@sunmedia.ca
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PELHAM DATEBOOK

JANUARY 17

CROCHETING FOR KNITTERS

This course is for knitters who would like to learn enough crochet to create edging or add crocheted flowers and other embellishments to a knitted item. Taking place at

Pelham Public Library, 3:15 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., this course costs \$15. Please register ahead.

p.m. to 7 p.m. Adults \$10, children under 12 \$6. Takeout and cash bar available.

Church St. Fenwick. Fenwick Lioness Soup and bread lunch, including a selection of homemade soups and a variety of breads, dessert, coffee and tea. \$7 per person.

PBA GENERAL MEETING

The Pelham Business Association will be holding its general meeting, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at Kelli's Restaurant. The meeting will be on marketing presentation for 2014's campaign.

JANUARY 18

PASTA DINNER

at Fonthill Lions Hall, Hwy. 20, 4

JANUARY 19

SOUP'S ON

at Fonthill Lions Club 999,

JANUARY 20

'RESOLUTION SOLUTION'

Free workshop sponsored by the Christadelphians of Niagara, at 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. or 7 p.m. at the Fonthill library, 43 Pelham Town Square. Pre-registration preferred by Jan. 17. Call 905-714-0701 or e-mail davejoanagray@gmail.com.

JANUARY 22

OVERDRIVE AND E-BOOKS

Learn step by step how to download and use Pelham Public Library's Overdrive e-books. You must have basic computer skills, an e-mail address and a Pelham Public Library card. Time 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; \$10 payable at time of registration.



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JANUARY 21

Continued on Page 22

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PELHAM DATEBOOK

From Page 20

JANUARY 23

ROSE CITY TOASTMASTERS

open house, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in Welland Arena's lower community room. See how impromptu and prepared speeches in a fun and supportive atmosphere can improve the confidence, communication and leadership skills of anyone, 18 and up. For more information, call 289-696-3167 or visit welland.toastmastersclubs.org. **LEGO**

at Wainfleet Township Public Library 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Children of all ages can drop-in during this time to build a Lego or up to creation. Please do not bring your own Lego.

JANUARY 25

PROGRESSIVE EUCHRE

hosted by Fonthill Lionsess at

the Fonthill Lions Hall, Hwy. 20, 7 p.m. Prizes, light food, cash bar, \$5 a person.

ONE WOMAN'S JOURNEY TO HELP

hosted by the Pelham Historical Society. The PHS meets monthly for presentations on local history or significant events. Membership is \$5 for the year, but all meetings are open to the public. Refreshments served. Woman's Journey to Help by Rose Dugan will be at Lookout Ridge Retirement from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

JANUARY 27

HEARING CLINIC

Connect Hearing will be at Pelham Public Library giving free hearing screenings and answering any questions. Free but please schedule your appointment ahead: 905-892-6068. Also on Feb. 24, both days 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

PELHAM HORTICULTURAL

Society meeting at the Fonthill library, 7:30 p.m. All welcome to come and hear Wolfe Bonham of Peace, Love and Landscaping talk about "Garden Design - Overcoming Landscaping Problems & Mistakes."

JANUARY 30

GNOCCINI DINNER

from the Casa Dante back door, 3 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. or until food lasts. Dinners are \$10. Takeout only. Sauce, meatballs, minestrone soup, and pasta taglioli are also available for takeout.

FEBRUARY 3

WINDOWS & INTRODUCTION

Marci Malhot, Pelham Public Library's Gadget Guy, will present information on WIN8.1

and will be available while you practice your newly-acquired skills. You must bring your own laptop or device with a WIN8.1 operating system. Time 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. cost \$10 payable at time of registration.

FLOSSIE COMES TO FENWICK

to predict the end of winter. Each year on groundhog day local elementary students are invited to Centennial Park to Flossie's den. Free hot chocolate and cookies to those who attend. Prizes for the colouring contest will be handed out. Sponsored by the Fabulous Fenwick Lions. Event starts at 10 a.m.

FEBRUARY 8

LADIES' DAY 2014

Ladies' Day 2014 (women helping women), from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. David's Anglican Church, 369 Thorold Rd. Entertainment, pampering

services, silent auction, vendors, tea room and door prizes. Tickets are \$10 and include tea/coffee and baked goods. Tickets at the door or in advance by calling 905-734-4627.

FEBRUARY 11

IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE

Niagara Women's Connection, a non-denominational Christian women's club invites you to a relaxing afternoon of friendship, inspiration and fun, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Guest speaker Helen Norris has one of the most inspirational stories of God's love and you won't want to miss what she has to share. We will be serving coffee, tea and special treats as well as door prizes galore, all for \$7. Babysitting is provided free of charge. This month's event is being held at Kirk on the Hill, 1344 Hallett St., Pelham. RSVP Niagara at Quesnelle at 905-788-9641 or e-mail mrs.q@vill.ca.

FEBRUARY 22

FENWICK LIONS RIBFEST

at the Fenwick Lions Club, all you can eat! Adults \$20, children 12 and under \$11. For tickets call Lion Albert at 905-892-4143.

ONGOING

PELHAM DOG PARK BOTTLE DRIVE FUNDRAISER

Bottle fundraiser will continue until Feb. 28. Bottles can be dropped off at 37 Pancake Lane, Fonthill, or for pick up call 905-892-4567 or email info@pelhamdogs.com

NIAGARA BONSAI SOCIETY

meets on the third Sunday of each month, 1:30 pm. at St. Mark's Church, 40 Byron St. (across from Simcoe Park), Niagara-on-the-Lake. All are welcome. For further information contact niagarabonsai@gmail.ca.



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